DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 396 026 UD 030 967

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TITLE	Latinas: Hispanic Women in the United States. The Hispanic Experience in America.
REPORT NO	ISBN-0-531-11186-5
PUB DATE	94
NOTE	191p.
AVAILABLE FROM	Franklin Watts, 95 Madison Avenue, New York, NY 10016.
PUB TYPE	Books (010) -- Historical Materials (060)
EDRS PRICE	Document Not Available from EDRS.
DESCRIPTORS	Achievement; Civil Rights; *Cultural Differences; Cultural Images; *Females; Feminism; *Hispanic Americans; Labor Relations; *Minority Groups; Sex Role; Spanish Speaking; *Stereotypes; *United States History
IDENTIFIERS	*Latinas; Machismo

ABSTRACT

The term "Latinas" encompasses many different groups of women. Despite the disparities among the cultures of their countries of origin, Spanish-speaking peoples have been lumped as "Hispanics," and later "Latinos," in the United States. The Latino group is rapidly becoming the largest minority population in the United States. Minority status has been instrumental in bringing the various Hispanic peoples together, but it has also perpetuated many stereotypes. Most notable is the myth of "machismo," the dominating behavior of patriarchal and chauvinistic men. This reverse of the coin of machismo is "hembrismo," the concept of docile femininity. The real-world stories of women of Hispanic origin in this volume counter the prevailing views of Hispanic women as subdued and ineffectual. Their stories began with the early settlements of the western United States, and continue through union and labor struggles in which Hispanic women took essential roles. Their roles and work are traced through the period of World War II and through the post-war era of Hispanic settlement in the northeastern United States. Hispanic civil rights struggles since the 1960s and the special struggles of women looking for workplace equality are also explored. (Contains 38 references.) (SLD)

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